



# QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS: BOOT CAMP FOR NEW RECRUITS

Prof. Dr. Karin Hannes  
Centre for Sociological Research  
Social Research Methodology Group, KU Leuven  
[Karin.hannes@kuleuven.be](mailto:Karin.hannes@kuleuven.be)



# THE EXPERIENCE THAT MOVED ME FROM EFFECTIVENESS REVIEWS (THE MOST COMMONLY FOUND TYPE OF REVIEW) TO QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS

Part 1

# Meet Emma

Born the 6th of October  
2010



# Meet Emma

Born the 6th of October  
2010  
Little sister of Door and  
Polle



## MAIN QUESTION:

How do I get rid of the  
extra pounds I gained  
after having delivered a  
couple of children?





# Meet Emma

Born the 6th of October  
2010  
Little sister of Door and  
Polle



## **'BIASED' TRANSLATION:**

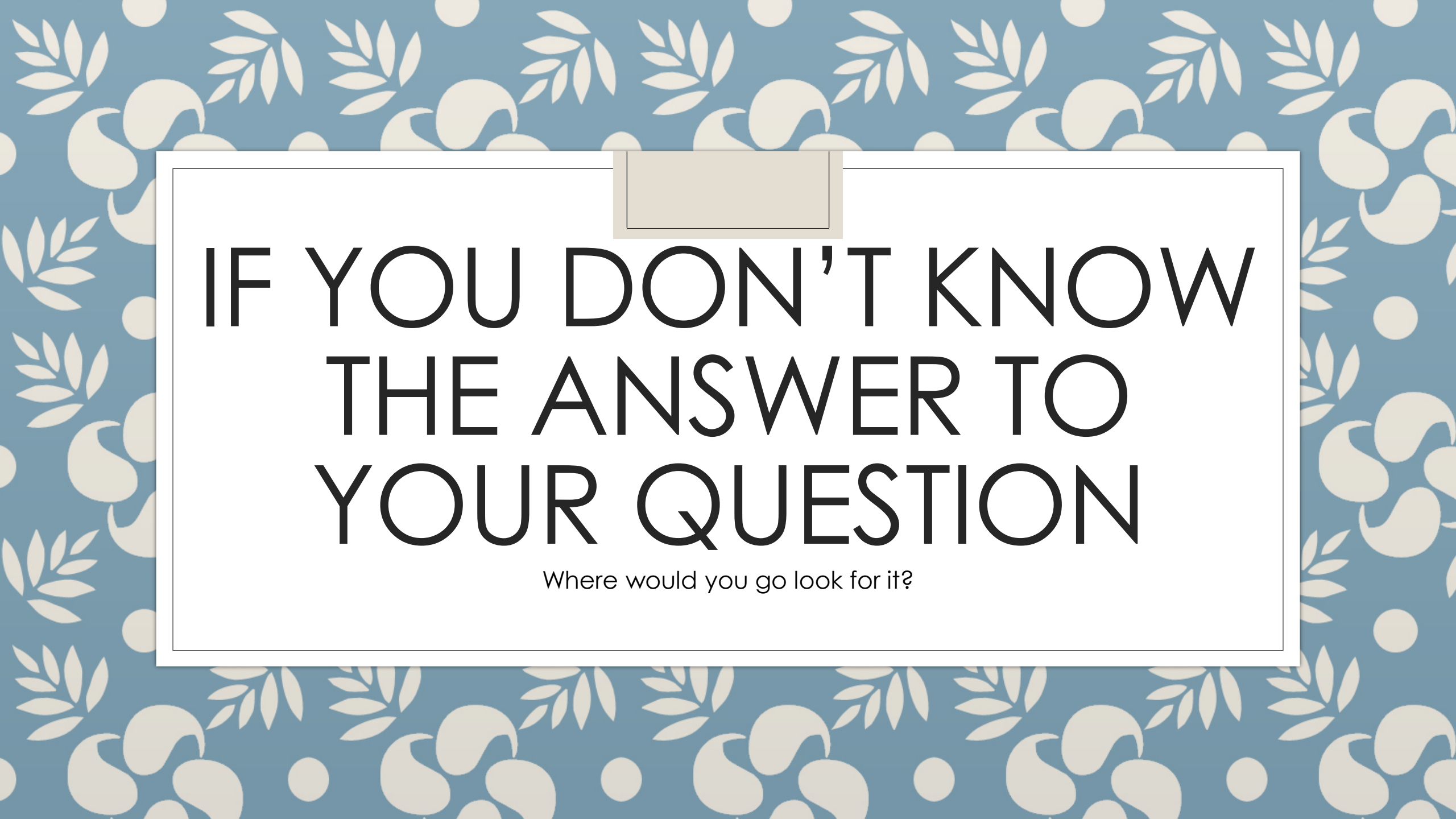
What interventions have  
proven to be effective  
to loose weight post-  
partum?



# Evidence of what?

- **Evidence of 'effectiveness':** the extent to which an intervention, when used appropriately, achieves the intended effect.

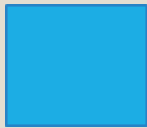
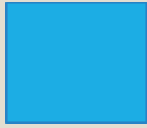
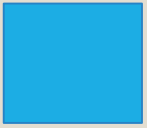




# IF YOU DON'T KNOW THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION

Where would you go look for it?

I would go and look....



## Quick exercise

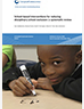
Think about where you might look for information now, if you are interested in the latest knowledge on a topic.



# I'd go to the Cochrane or Campbell library!


## THE CAMPBELL COLLABORATION ONLINE LIBRARY

### Featured reviews



School-based interventions for reducing disciplinary school exclusion

Download: [Title](#) [Protocol](#) [Review](#) [Plain Language Summary](#)



Diet or exercise, or both, for weight reduction in women after childbirth

Download: [Title](#) [Protocol](#) [Review](#) [Plain Language Summary](#)

Full text keyword search <sup>[?]</sup>

Search...

[Advanced search](#)

### Campbell systematic reviews

Browse by Coordinating Group

- Crime and Justice
- Disability
- Education
- International Development
- Knowledge Translation and Implementation
- Nutrition
- Social Welfare

### Campbell systematic reviews

Browse by Coordinating Group

- Crime and Justice
- Disability
- Education
- International Development
- Knowledge Translation and Implementation
- Nutrition
- Social Welfare

[Wiley InterScience home](#)

[My Profile](#) [Log In](#)



# The Cochrane Library

Evidence for healthcare decision-making



[Home](#) | [About Cochrane](#) | [Access to Cochrane](#) | [For Authors](#) | [Help](#) | [Save Title to My Profile](#)

### BROWSE

Cochrane Reviews: [By Topic](#) | [New Reviews](#) | [Updated Reviews](#) | [A-Z](#) | [By Review Group](#)

Other Resources: [Other Reviews](#) | [Clinical Trials](#) | [Methods Studies](#) | [Technology Assessments](#) | [Economic Evaluations](#)

[More Info](#)

### SEARCH

Enter search term  Title, Abstract or Keywords

[Advanced Search](#) | [MeSH Search](#) | [Search History](#) | [Saved Searches](#)

### [Intervention Review]

## Diet or exercise, or both, for weight reduction in women after childbirth

Amanda R Amorim<sup>1</sup>, Yvonne M Linne<sup>2</sup>, Paulo Mauricio C Lourenco<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Epidemiology, UERJ-IMS, Rua São Francisco Xavier, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. <sup>2</sup>Obesity Unit, Karolinska University Hospital, Stockholm, Sweden. <sup>3</sup>Department of Epidemiology, University of State of Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Contact address: Miss Amanda R Amorim, PhD Student, Epidemiology, UERJ-IMS, Rua São Francisco Xavier, 524 7º andar Bloco D e E, Maracanã, Rio de Janeiro, CEP: 20559-900 RJ, Brazil. [amanda@ims.uerj.br](mailto:amanda@ims.uerj.br). [aar@ipm.regionh.dk](mailto:aar@ipm.regionh.dk). (Editorial group: [Cochrane Pregnancy and Childbirth Group](#).)

*Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, Issue 2, 2008 (Status in this issue: *Edited, commented*)

Copyright © 2008 The Cochrane Collaboration. Published by John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD005627.pub2

This version first published online: 18 July 2007 in Issue 3, 2007. Re-published online with edits: 4 February 2008 in Issue 2, 2008. Last assessed as up-to-date: 22 April 2007. ([Dates and statuses?](#))

This record should be cited as: Amorim AR, Linne YM, Lourenco PMC. Diet or exercise, or both, for weight reduction in women after childbirth. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2007, Issue 3. Art. No.: CD005627. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD005627.pub2.

# The answer to my question

- Women who exercised did not lose significantly more weight than women in the usual care group.
- Women who took part in a diet or diet plus exercise program, lost more weight than women in the usual care.
- There was no difference in the magnitude of weight loss between diet and diet plus exercise group.
- The interventions seemed not to affect breastfeeding performance adversely.

A study in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition found that **those who ate cereals were lower in weight compared to those who ate meat and eggs, bread or skipped breakfast.**

# The answer to my question

SIMPLE logical reasoning:

- IF a diet helps to loose weight after pregnancy
- IF cereals have proven to work well as a diet
- THEN the consumption of cereals will lead to weight loss after pregnancy!
- Right?

Wrong effect!  
And then you panic...





... Or you'd go and dig a little deeper!

**Weight, Diet, and Physical Activity-Related Beliefs and Practices Among Pregnant and Postpartum Latino Women: The Role of Social Support**

Pamela L. Thornton,<sup>1,8</sup> Edith C. Kieffer,<sup>2</sup> Yamir Salabarría-Peña,<sup>3</sup>  
Angela Odoms-Young,<sup>4</sup> Sharla K. Willis,<sup>5</sup> Helen Kim,<sup>6</sup>  
and Maria A. Salinas<sup>7</sup>

**Weight Loss Programs for Urban-based, Postpartum African-American Women: Perceived Barriers and Preferred Components**

Rosanna Setse • Ruby Grogan • Lisa A. Cooper •  
Donna Strobino • Neil R. Powe • Wanda Nicholson

# You'd go and dig a little deeper

## **Conclusion study 1 (Thornton)**

We need community-based, family oriented programs to increase the chance of successful weight reduction.

## **Conclusion study 2 (Setse)**

Weight loss interventions should address the psychological effects of childbearing, affordability and perceptions of body image. They should incorporate family-centred approaches.

**AGAIN very diverse types of recommendations...**



What is it?

What type of questions can I answer with them?

What is my choice pallet?

How do I choose amongst the options available?

# QUALITATIVE EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS

# What is it? Conceptualisation Aggregation in a review context

Aggregation refers to  
'adding up' (aggregating)  
findings from primary  
studies to answer a review  
question...

... to indicate the direction  
or size of effect

... and our degree of  
confidence in that finding

Gough D; Thomas J; Oliver S (2012) Clarifying  
differences between review designs and  
methods. *Systematic Reviews*. 1(28)

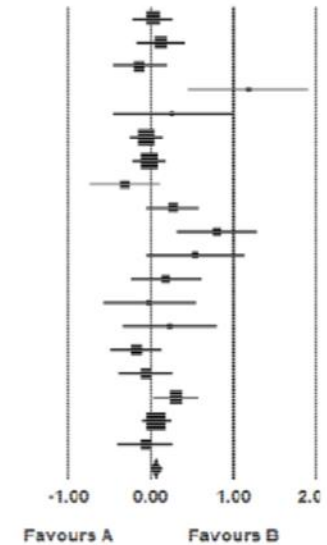
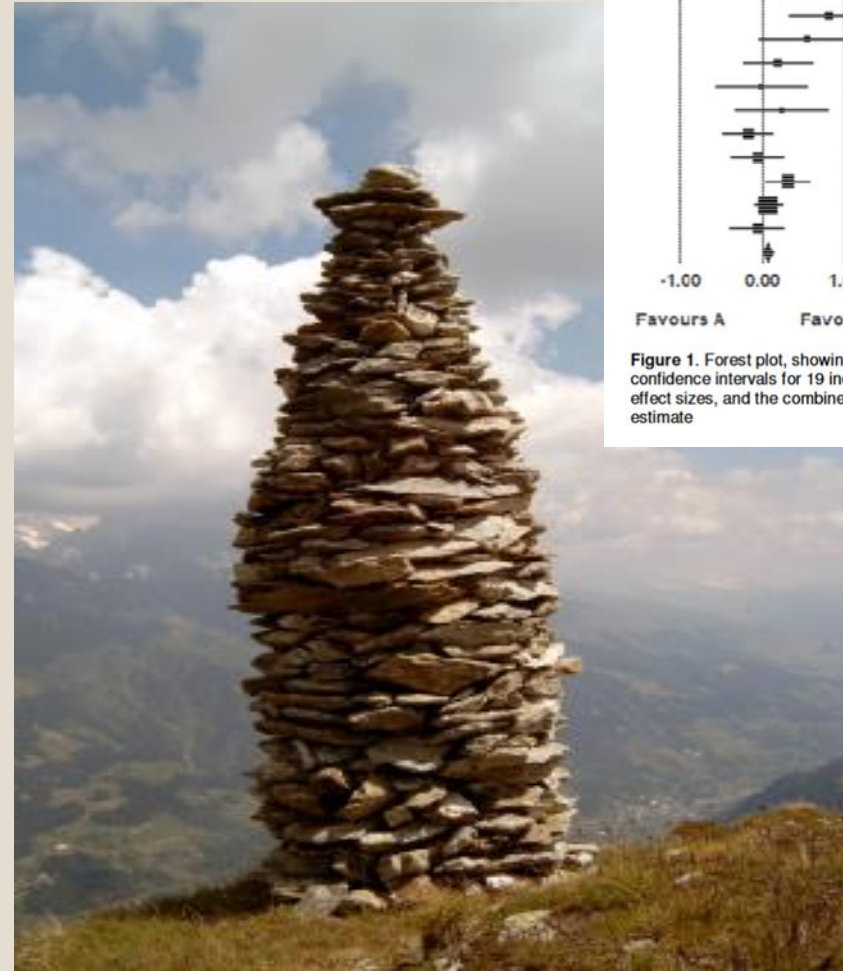


Figure 1. Forest plot, showing 95% confidence intervals for 19 individual study effect sizes, and the combined effect size estimate



# What is it? Conceptualisation Configuration in a review context

Configuration involves the arrangement (configuration) of the findings of primary studies to answer the review question....

... to offer a meaningful picture of what research is telling us

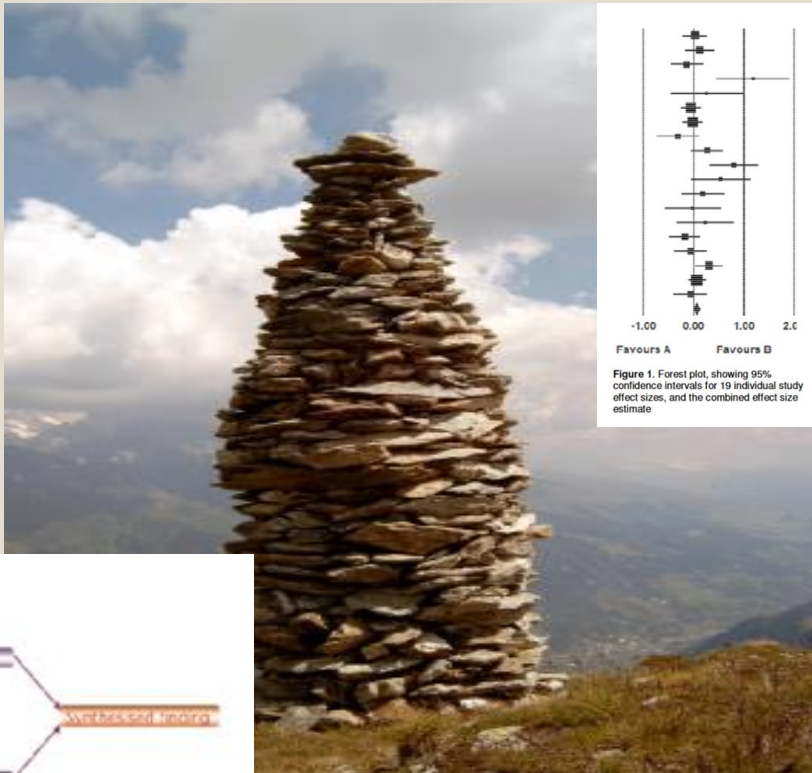
... across a potentially wide area of research



# What is it? Conceptualisation

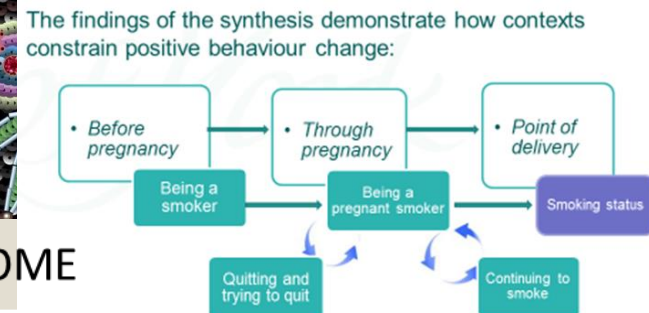
Aggregative 'quan'? Not necessarily!

Configurative 'qual', YES, although quants sometimes 'explore' as well.



OUTCOME

OUTCOME





What is it?  
“A systematic inquiry into meaning”



# What is it?

*'The process or result of building up separate elements, especially ideas, into a connected whole, especially a theory or system'* (Oxford English Dictionary)

## Systematic

- Planned
- Ordered/structured
- Transparent audit trail
- “Reconstructed logic of science”

## Empirical

- It builds on studies that depend upon the world of experience, on what we can capture with our senses.  
(So actually, it is to be situated on the meta-level rather than the primary study level)

## Inquiry into meaning

- Developing a more complex picture of a phenomenon or situation.
- Rich, Deep, Thick, Textured, Insightful, ...



# What type of Questions can we answer?

## In the evidence based discourse:

- **Evidence of 'feasibility'**: the extent to which an intervention is practical and practicable, whether or not an intervention is physically, culturally or financially practical or possible within a given context.
- **Evidence of 'appropriateness'** the extent to which an intervention fits with a situation, how an intervention relates to the context in which it is given.
- **Evidence of 'meaningfulness'**: the extent to which an intervention is positively experienced by the population and relates to the personal experience, opinions, values, beliefs and interpretations of the population.

## Apart from that it covers questions related to

- How people experience a certain condition or challenging life circumstances.
- What they value or not and why.
- What exactly impacts on their behavior.
- What obstacles or challenges they come across.
- How particular programs need to be rolled out to meet their needs etc.

## Exercise

Formulate your own review question. In defining it you may want to consider:

S    setting

P    population of interest

I    topic of interest

E    what you are  
      interested in  
      evaluating:

attitudes, perceptions,  
experiences, opinions,...

In addition, think about  
what sort of designs/study  
types might answer your  
question.

# What is my choice pallet?

- Qualitative Systematic Review
- Qualitative Meta-Synthesis
- Qualitative Research Synthesis

## **Qualitative Evidence Synthesis**

- A huge big...

# What is my choice pallet?





Choice pallet:

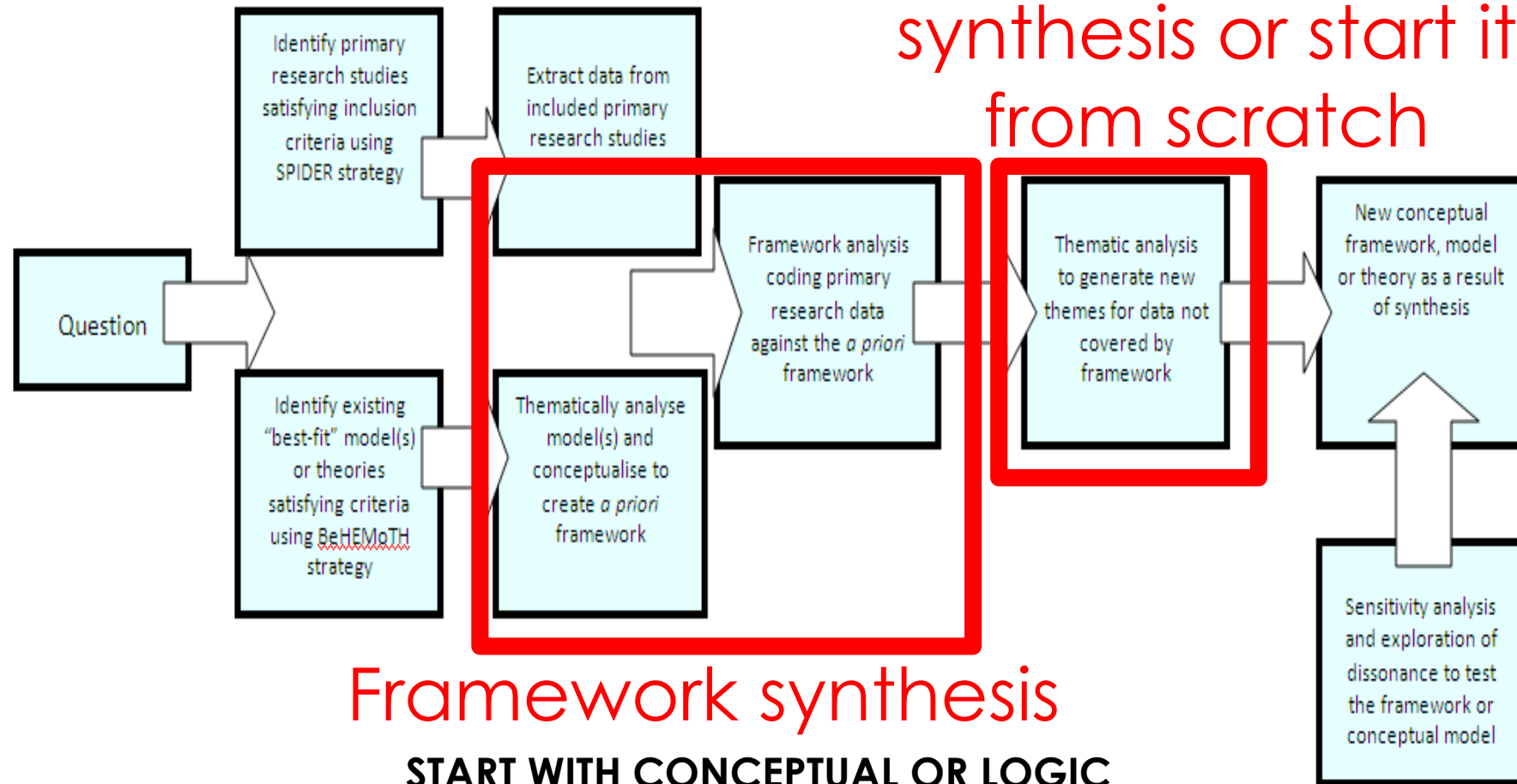
What is it that different approaches synthesizing findings from primary studies do?

- Produce theories or models that are based on phenomena involving processes of contextualised understanding and action (**Grounded theory**)
- (Rapidly) respond to a review need for evaluating an intervention's appropriateness, acceptability and effectiveness (**Thematic analysis/Framework synthesis**)
- Bring together separate findings into an interpretive explanation that is greater than the sum of the parts (**Meta ethnography**)
- Critically approach the literature in terms of deconstructing research traditions or theoretical assumptions (**Critical interpretive synthesis**)
- Summarize evidence in order to develop lines of action for practice and policy (**Meta-aggregation**)
- Unpicking the mutually interdependent relationships between persons and environments, by formulating patterns 'With this intervention, these outcomes occur with these population foci and in these settings' (**Ecological triangulation**)
- Bring together research of widely different designs and paradigms (**Meta-narrative**)

Configurative review,  
but based on the principle of **integration**

CODING  
CATEGORIZING  
DEVELOPMENT OF THEMES

Figure 1. Systematic review using best-fit framework synthesis

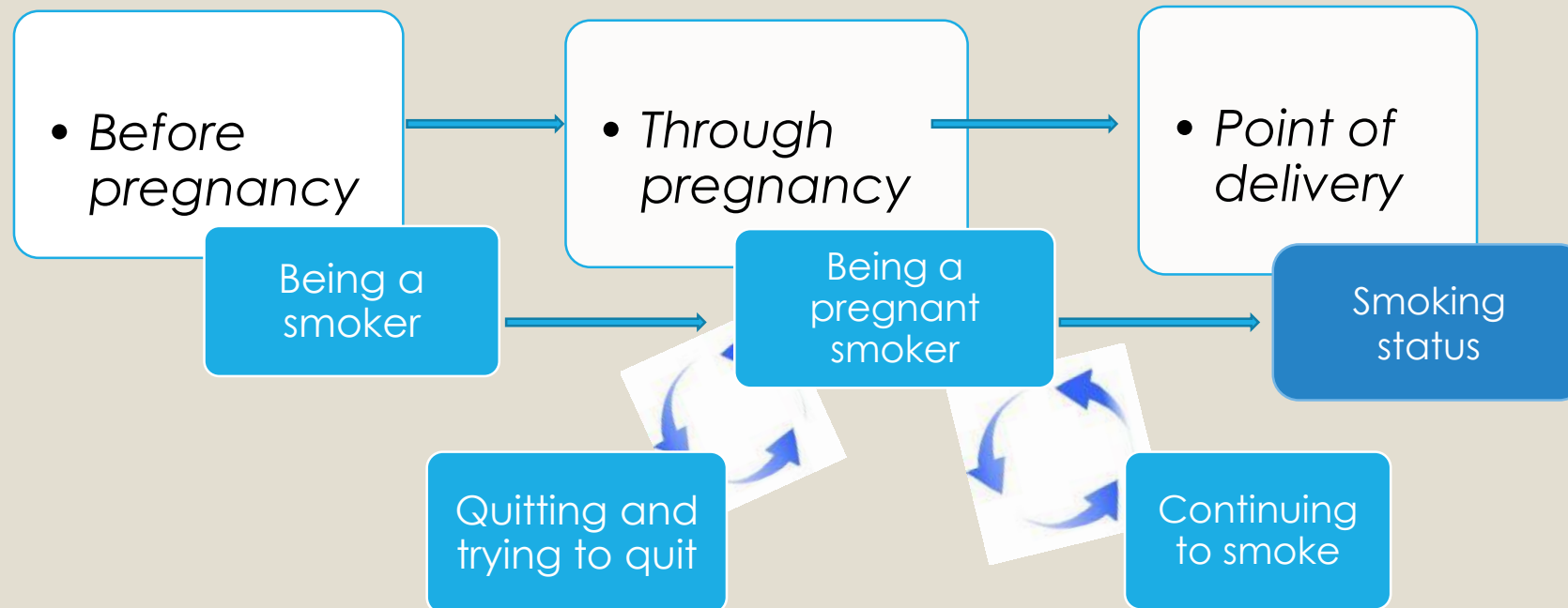


Framework synthesis

START WITH CONCEPTUAL OR LOGIC  
MODEL/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND TEST  
DATA from published studies AGAINST IT

Configurative review,  
but based on the principle of **interpretation**

**Meta-ethnography:** The findings of the synthesis demonstrate how contexts constrain positive behaviour change:



**MODEL IS END PHASE OF THE REVIEW**

- ...
- Methodological Expertise in Team
- Available Resources
- Frequency of Use of Method
- Popularity/"Sexiness" of Method
- What a friend/ colleague/ mentor has used or recommends
- Bad experiences of others
- Good experiences of others
- Type of Question (fixed or open)
- Extent of Description versus Interpretation
- Role of Theory in your study
- Type of Data Available (rich or thin)
- Intended Output (theory, lines of action, overview...)
- By Examining Methods Overviews and Published Examples
- ...

## Exercise

Making a choice between approaches is not always simple. If you are conducting qualitative research, how do you generally choose between designs and techniques available?

Making a choice between approaches is not always simple.  
If you are conducting qualitative research, how do you generally choose between designs and techniques available?





Is Your Question.....

- **Fixed?** – Pre-defined as a SPICE (**S**etting-**P**erspective- **I**nterest, **P**henomenon of – **C**omparison- **E**valuation) – Question is an “Anchor”
- **Negotiable?** – To be explored as part of initial review process – Becomes clearer as you examine data (cp. Grounded theory approaches) – Question is a “Compass”

Will You Describe or Interpret?

- **Description** – What does the data say? – factual reporting of “**epidemiology**” of studies, themes etc...
- Reader does work of interpretation
- **Interpretation** – What does the data mean? – “**diagnosis**” – subjective interpretation of “signs and symptoms” from data and themes etc...
- Reviewer does work of interpretation – may be contested

Will You Generate, Explore, Test Theory

- **Generate** – may require “suspension of disbelief” – quality assessment/value judgement may come later (cp. Brainstorming)- **Grounded Theory, Meta-ethnography**
- **Explore** – looking for patterns - **Narrative Synthesis, Thematic Synthesis**
- **Test** – quality assessment differentiates well-supported and unsupported data - **Framework Synthesis (incl. Best Fit Synthesis)**

How Rich (“Thick”) is Your Data?

- Qualitative data from “thin” studies (or textual responses to surveys) will not sustain interpretive approaches
- Limited to **Meta-Aggregation, Thematic Synthesis, Framework Synthesis, Narrative Synthesis** –type approaches
- Rich/“Thick” reports will sustain Meta-Ethnography/Grounded Theory – may allow selective sampling/ theoretical saturation
- NB. Is “Unit of Analysis” Individual Study (**Meta-Aggregation, Thematic Synthesis**) or “Body of Evidence” (e.g. **Meta-Narrative** or **Critical Interpretive Synthesis** approaches) or even Theory (**Framework Synthesis/Best Fit Synthesis**)?

What is Your Intended Output?

- “the output of some methods of synthesis (**Thematic Synthesis**, textual **Narrative Synthesis, Framework Synthesis**, and ecological triangulation) is **more directly relevant to policymakers and designers of interventions** than the outputs of methods with a more constructivist orientation (**Meta-Study, Meta-Narrative, Meta-Ethnography, Grounded Theory, CIS**) which are generally more complex and conceptual” (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009)
- **Thematic Synthesis** (including **Meta-Aggregation**) and **Framework Synthesis** produce findings that directly inform practitioners (Thomas & Harden, 2009)
- Interpretive approaches (e.g. **CIS, Meta-Ethnography**) produce a model that requires practitioners to interpret relevance and applicability to their own context
- **Narrative Synthesis** or **EPPI-Centre** (matrix) methods may help to integrate and present quantitative/qualitative work



# SYNTHESIS QUIZ

For each of the following scenarios **identify** the review characteristics and **try to match** to an appropriate type of synthesis

For each of the cases, consider:

**1. Role of Theory**

**2. Expertise**

**3. Describe/Interpret**

**4. Output/Product**

## Scenario A:

You are working as a group of topic experts and experienced qualitative researchers to examine the phenomenon of “Willingness to Hasten Death”. There are less than eight rich qualitative studies. No-one has yet conducted a synthesis to look at what is meant by the concept. Your review will help those who work in terminal care to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon.

Consider:

1. Role of Theory

2. Expertise

3. Describe/Interpret

4. Output/Product

## Scenario B:

You are a member of a government-funded Institute producing best practice reviews for primary education. You are asked to examine all evidence, quantitative and qualitative, for the use of volunteers in guiding pupils from disadvantaged families to improve their academic competence level. You are expected to turn around a report in a very short time frame. Your final review is expected to include Recommendations for Practice.

Consider:

1. Role of Theory

2. Expertise

3. Describe/Interpret

4. Output/Product



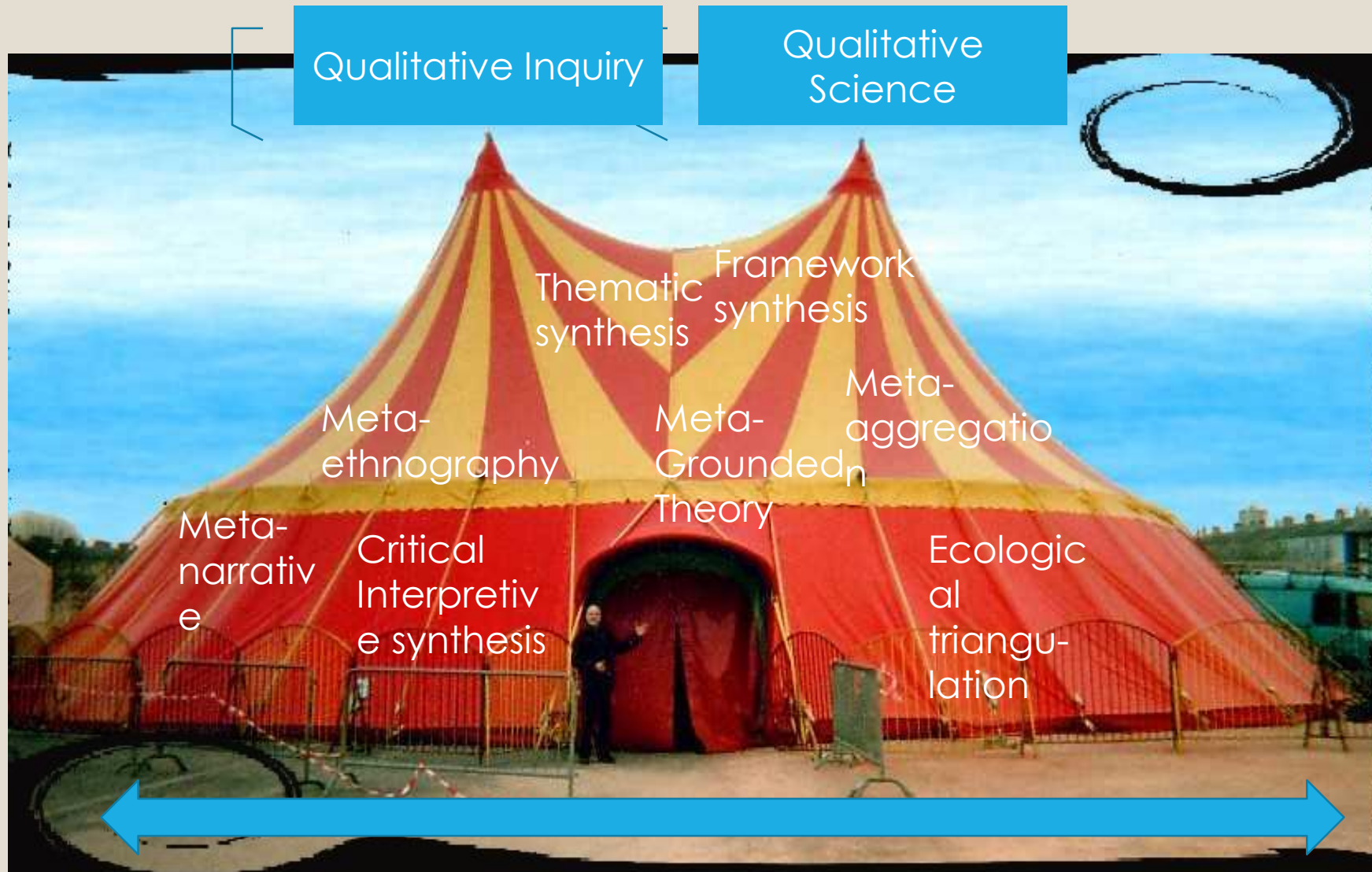
# That's it?

# Can we start?

## No

You probably still have to figure out who you are as a review author.

# The researcher's worldview



# The reviewer's worldview

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative  
Science

**Idealist**

**Realist**

Meta-narrative	Critical interpretive synthesis	Meta-ethnography	Grounded theory	Thematic synthesis	The JBI meta-aggregative approach	Framework synthesis	Ecological triangulation
Subjective idealism	Subjective idealism	Objective idealism	Objective idealism	Critical realism	Critical realism	Critical realism	Scientific realism

There is no shared reality independent of multiple alternative human constructions

There is a world of collectively shared understandings:

Knowledge of reality is mediated by our perceptions and beliefs

It is possible for knowledge to approximate closely an external reality

Spencer, 2003

Based on Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009

# Qualitative Scientists

“To see means”

- Clarity
- Neutrality

“What you see, is what you get.” →  
Transparency

REMAIN CLOSE TO THE DATA AS REPORTED  
BY THE AUTHORS OF PRIMARY STUDIES!

The ‘fact’ approach

Masters of the window





# Qualitative Scientists

## Quality appraisal

- Check the credibility of the findings in terms of an accurate display of people's voices reported by the author of the primary study
- Check the means to correct for the impact of the researcher on the findings
- Check whether the conclusions are grounded in the data

Before using it for decision making processes





# Qualitative Inquirists

“TO see means”

- To step in someone else's shoes
- To explore the dark corners or gaps in our knowledge base
- To go beyond what has been reported in the primary studies
- To problemize existing literature

“Shed light where there has been no light before” → ILLUMINATION

‘The interpretive approach’

MASTERS OF THE LANTERN



# Qualitative Inquirists

## QUALITY OF THE STUDY

- the process of systematically examining research evidence to assess its relevance and utility for the story line to be developed.

before using it to inform a decision





# WHICH CAMP ARE YOU IN?

How tolerant are you to the amount of structure and ambiguity that is  
inherent in the synthesis method?

Is your epistemological stance congruent with that of the synthesis method?

I like to problematize the content of the studies I investigate.

I like iterative searches, starting from a purposeful sample perspective.

I like to make sense out of a diverse set of papers. I am usually attracted to the complexity of a particular phenomenon.

In terms of what to include I prefer the relevance of an article for my topic of interest above its methodological robustness.

I am descriptively oriented, trying to stay true to what my colleague researchers have found and reported on.

I want my search procedure to be structured and linear, with clear inclusion criteria from the start.

I like to give more weight to articles that are of high quality and I feel uncomfortable with content that does not meet my methodological standards.

I like to compare content and would rather opt for a homogeneous sample of papers than a diverse one. My message needs to be as clear as possible for end-users.

## Philosophical stance test

## IDEALIST

I like to problematize the content of the studies I investigate.

I like iterative searches, starting from a purposeful sample perspective.

I like to make sense out of a diverse set of papers. I am usually attracted to the complexity of a particular phenomenon.

In terms of what to include I prefer the relevance of an article for my topic of interest above its methodological robustness.

## REALIST

I am descriptively oriented, trying to stay true to what my colleague researchers have found and reported on.

I want my search procedure to be structured and linear, with clear inclusion criteria from the start.

I like to give more weight to articles that are of high quality and I feel uncomfortable with content that does not meet my methodological standards.

I like to compare content and would rather opt for a homogeneous sample of papers than a diverse one. My message needs to be as clear as possible for end-users.

## PRAGMATIST

## Philosophical stance test



# The reviewer's worldview

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative  
Science

**Idealist**

**Realist**

Meta-narrative	Critical interpretive synthesis	Meta-ethnography	Grounded theory	Thematic synthesis	The JBI meta-aggregative approach	Framework synthesis	Ecological triangulation
Subjective idealism	Subjective idealism	Objective idealism	Objective idealism	Critical realism	Critical realism	Critical realism	Scientific realism

There is no shared reality independent of multiple alternative human constructions

There is a world of collectively shared understandings:

Knowledge of reality is mediated by our perceptions and beliefs

It is possible for knowledge to approximate closely an external reality

Spencer, 2003

Based on Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009

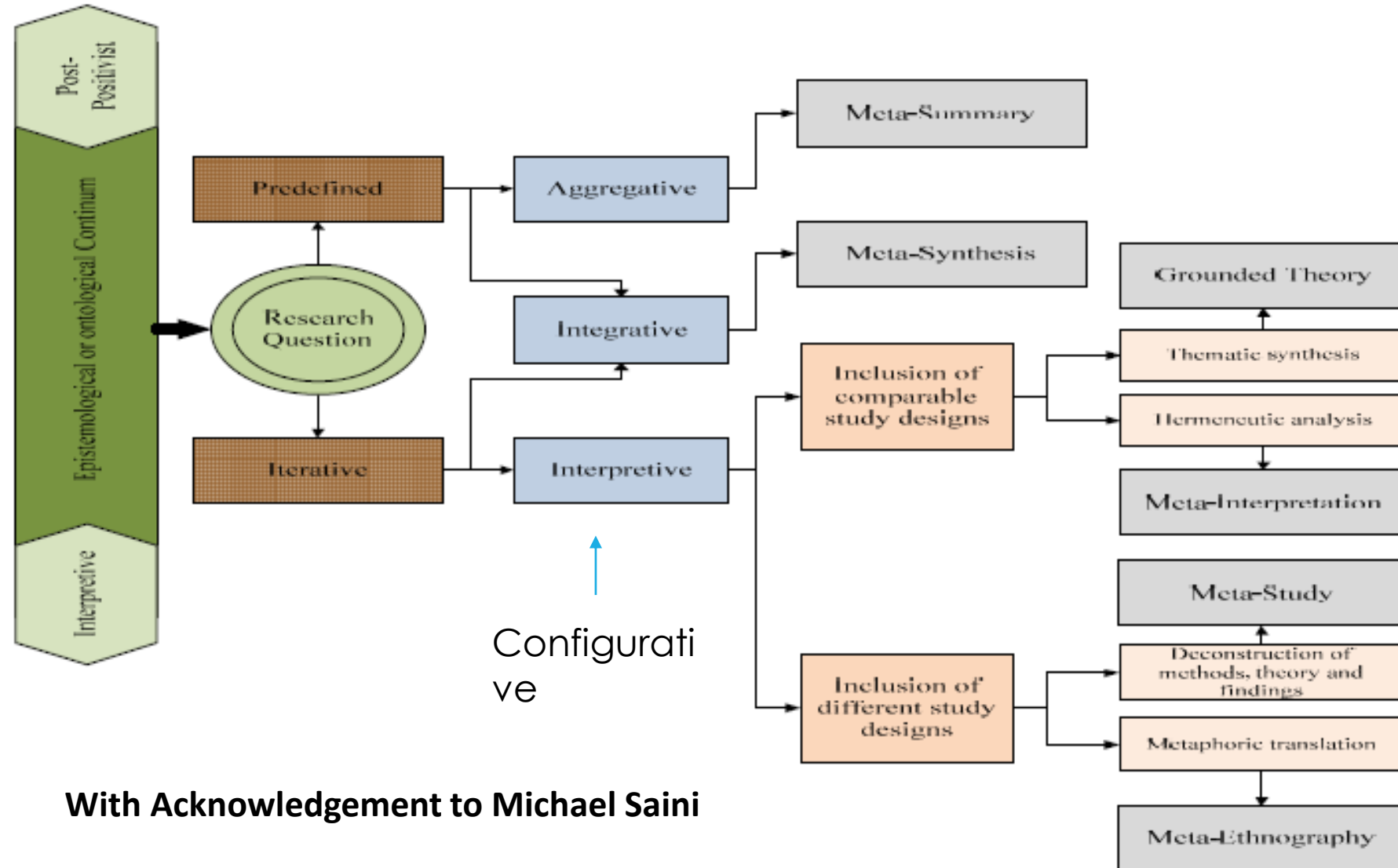


# PRELIMINARY REVIEW PRACTICE

# Duo-job!

1. Define your philosophical stances, based on your test results, and identify any conflicts between the two of you that may complicate a review process.
2. Based on your initial review question, define your population of interest, your topic of interest, your setting and what you intend to evaluate (experiences, opinions, viewpoints, actions,...)
3. Decide on a particular goal for your project, based on your knowledge of what different approaches can do.
4. Make a selection of approaches that might work well for you.

# Decision Tree for Choosing a Method for Qualitative Synthesis





WORKING OUR WAY  
THROUGH THE STEPS  
OF A QUALITATIVE  
EVIDENCE SYNTHESIS



# Process

- Develop a protocol with a particular method for qualitative evidence synthesis in mind
  - Formulate a review question
  - Define in- and exclusion criteria
  - Define a search and screening/sampling strategy
  - Outline your quality assessment approach
  - Decide on how to extract data from the set of articles selected for inclusion in the review
- SEARCH, SAMPLE, SCREEN
- CRITICALLY APPRAISE WHERE APPROPRIATE
- **EXTRACT DATA FROM PRIMARY RESEARCH**



# WORKED EXAMPLE INTEGRATIVE REVIEW

- **Meta-ethnography**
- Meta-summary
- Meta-study
- Realist synthesis
- Meta-narrative mapping
- Critical Interpretive Synthesis
- Narrative Synthesis
- Textual narrative synthesis
- Ecological triangulation
- **Framework synthesis**
- Meta-interpretation

## ◦ **Meta-aggregation**

- Bayesian meta-analysis
- Content analysis
- Case Survey
- Qualitative Comparative analysis
- **Thematic synthesis**
- Cross-case analysis
- Formal Grounded theory
- ...
- Mixed-method synthesis

Prof. Dr. Karin Hannes  
 Centre for Sociological Research  
 Social Research Methodology Group,  
 KU Leuven  
 Karin.hannes@kuleuven.be

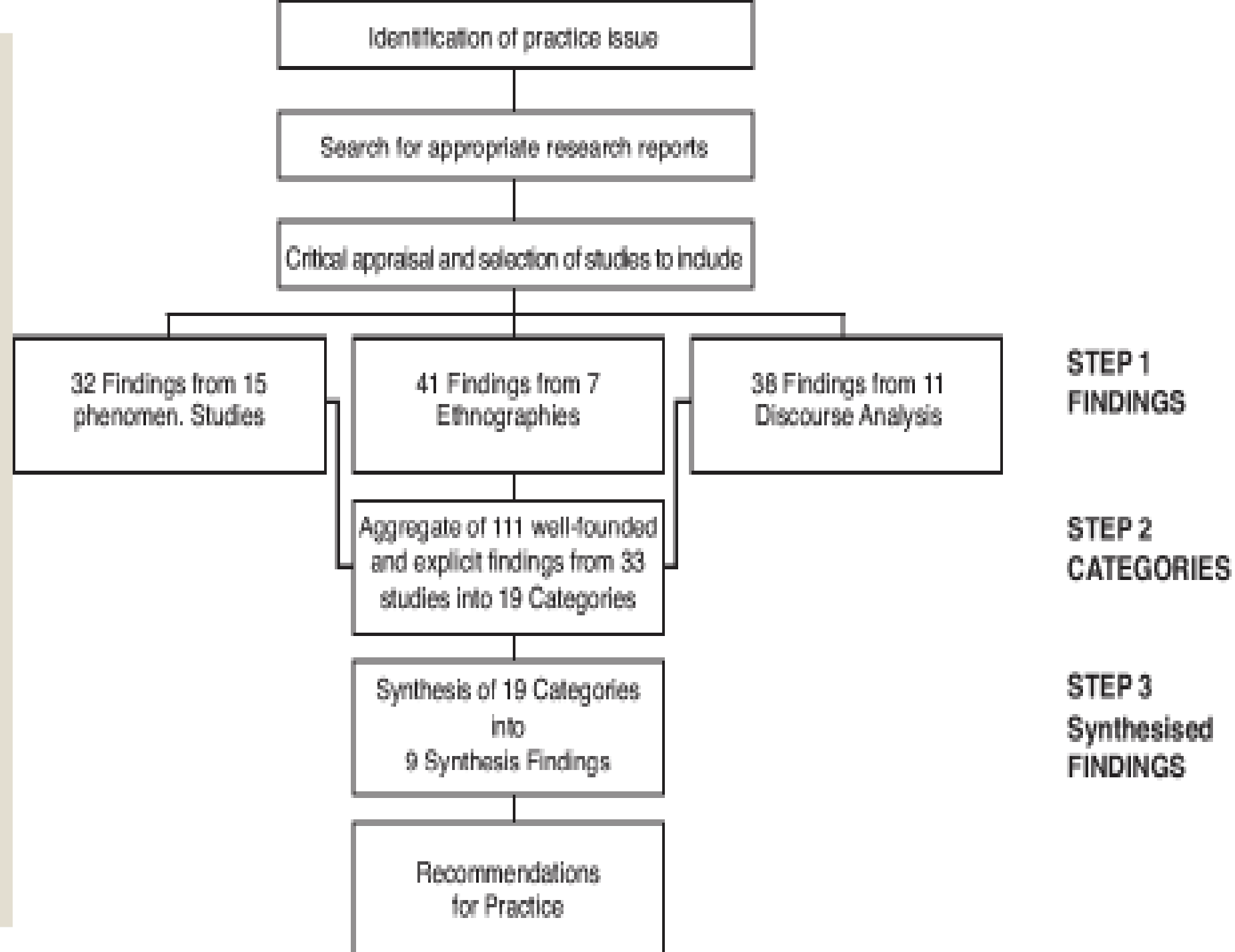
## The Meta-Aggregative Approach to Synthesis

## The Methodology of Qualitative Evidence Synthesis (QES)

There are over 20  
 different approaches  
 to qualitative evidence  
 synthesis!

# The meta-aggregative approach

- An approach to QES designed to model the Cochrane and Campbell process of systematic reviews summarizing results of quantitative studies, whilst being sensitive to the nature of qualitative research and its traditions (Pearson, 2004).
  - Based on an **a-priori protocol**, with established, answerable question, explicit criteria for inclusion and a documented review of methods for searching, appraisal, extraction and synthesis of data
- Inspired by the founding fathers of American pragmatism, it concentrates on the original researcher's processed data and summarizes common and competing findings to produce cross-generalisations that lead to 'lines of action' (Hannes & Lockwood, 2011).
  - the value of any thought lies in its **practical use and consequences**. It is the focus on practical consequences that characterizes meta-aggregation as a synthesis approach.



# Experiences from Employees with Team Learning

- A worked example of the meta-aggregative approach to qualitative evidence synthesis

1. Methodology of  
Educational Sciences  
Research Group

2. Professional Learning and  
Development, Corporate  
training and Lifelong Learning  
Research Group



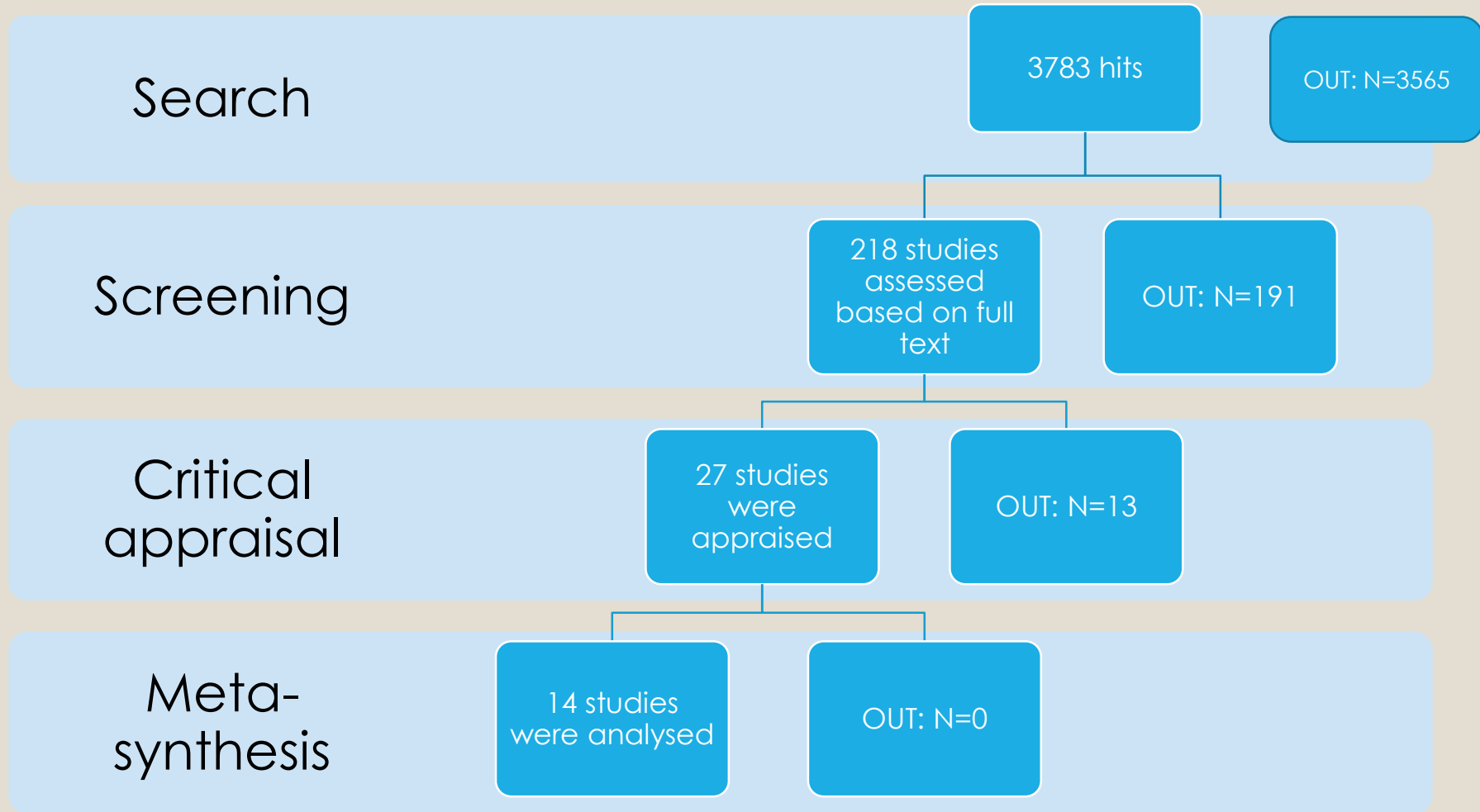


# The problem statement

- Team learning has mainly been investigated with a strong focus on effectiveness, mostly driven by the need to think in terms of performance outcomes of team members.
- Qualitative research evidence on how employees experience team learning has not yet systematically been synthesized:
  - **Why?** Their experiences may increase our understanding of why certain team learning processes can fail or succeed, what employees value and what may need to be adapted for a more successful implementation of team learning programs.

# The research question

- How is team learning experienced by employees?
  - The meaning of learning
  - Opinions and beliefs about team learning
  - Positive and negative aspects of team learning
- Which implications for team learning practice and policy can be drawn from the synthesis?


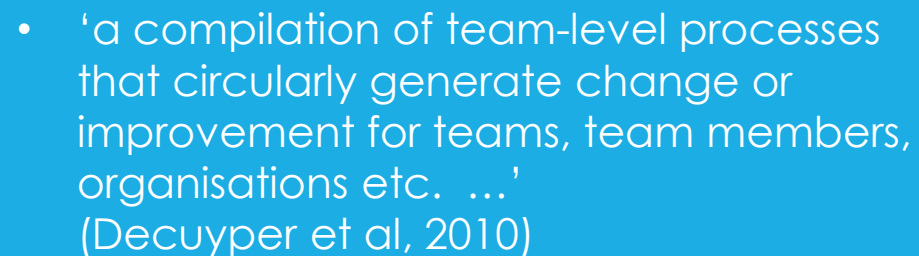



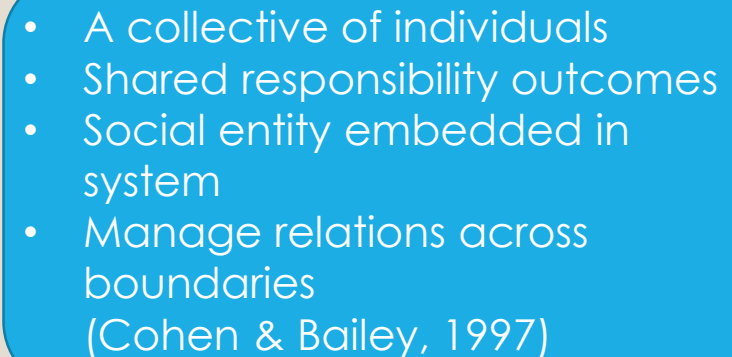
# The search for studies

- An inclusive approach (1990 'The Fifth Discipline' - 2011)
- Initial scoping review to identify key words
  - **Topic of interest:** Team learning OR group learning OR collective learning OR cooperative learning  
AND
  - **Population & setting:** Employee, OR vocation\* training/learning, organi?ation
- Information sources
  - Electronic search in 7 major databases
  - Handsearch in 13 topic specific journals

# Screening for relevance

- S      Setting    Vocational learning or work setting
- P      Population      Employees/ adults /team members
- I      Interest    Team learning
- E      Evaluation      Experiences  
                                 Opinions


- 
- 
- 'a compilation of team-level processes that circularly generate change or improvement for teams, team members, organisations etc. ...'  
(Decuyper et al, 2010)

- 
- 
- A collective of individuals
  - Shared responsibility outcomes
  - Social entity embedded in system
  - Manage relations across boundaries  
(Cohen & Bailey, 1997)

Types of studies: Qualitative, with a clear methods and results section

# Critical appraisal of studies

Address: <http://qari.joannabriggs.edu.au/qari.cfm> go

 **QARI** Scores well on assessing validity in a comparison of instruments  
(Hannes & Lockwood, 2010)

**Qualitative Assessment and Review Instrument**

[Reviews](#) [Studies](#) [Categorise](#) [Synthesis](#) [Logout](#) [About](#) [Secondary](#) [Closed](#)

**Assessment for : Pearson - Int J of Nursing Practice (2003)**

Type Primaryy  
User alan

**Select Detail Assessment Extraction Finding**

- 1) There is congruity between the stated philosophical perspective and the research methodology. Yes
- 2) There is congruity between the research methodology and the research question or objectives Yes
- 3) There is congruity between the research methodology and the methods used to collect data Yes
- 4) There is congruity between the research methodology and the representation and analysis of data Yes
- 5) There is congruity between the research methodology and the interpretation of results Yes
- 6) There is a statement locating the researcher culturally or theoretically Yes
- 7) The influence of the researcher on the research, and vice-versa, is addressed Yes
- 8) Participants, and their voices, are adequately represented Yes
- 9) The research is ethical according to current criteria or, for recent studies, there is evidence of ethical approval by an appropriate body Yes
- 10) Conclusions drawn in the research report do appear to flow from the analysis, or interpretation, of the data Yes

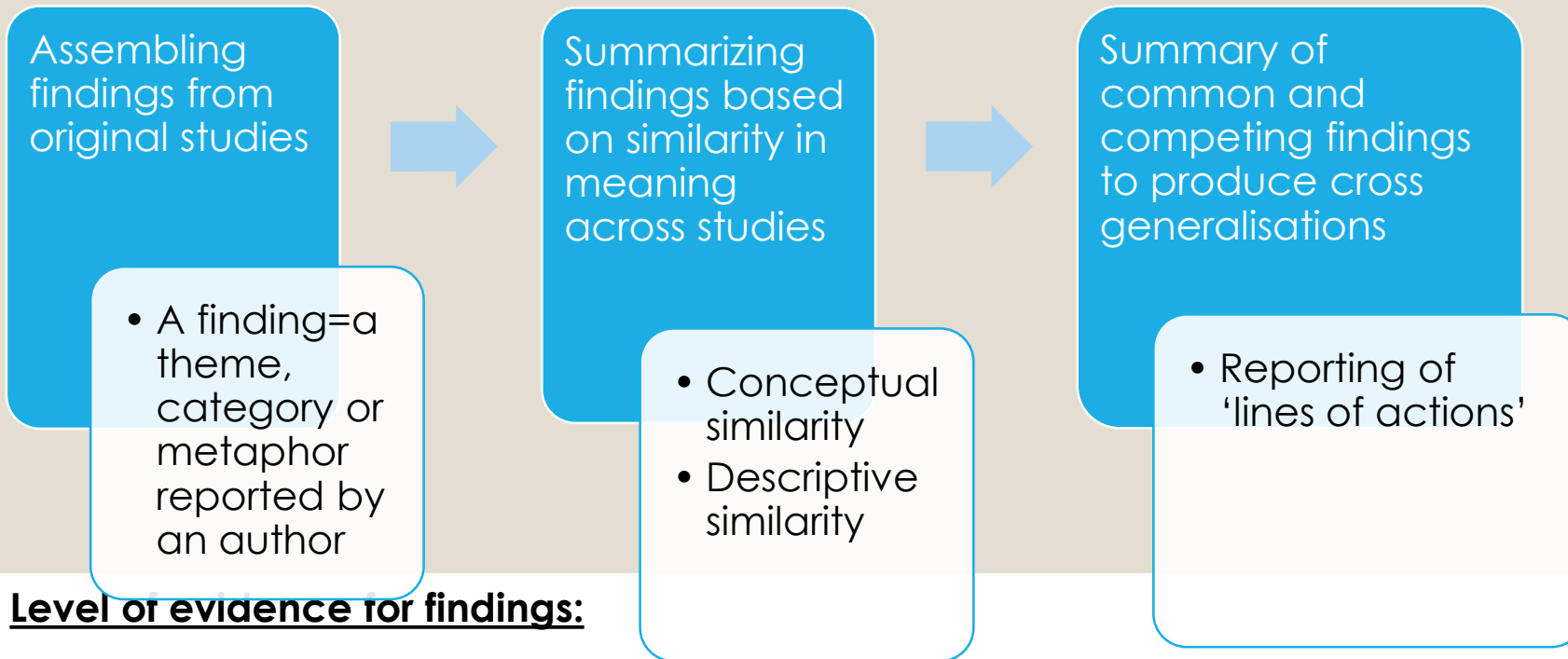
Include

Reason

Internet zone



# The analytic process



## Level of evidence for findings:

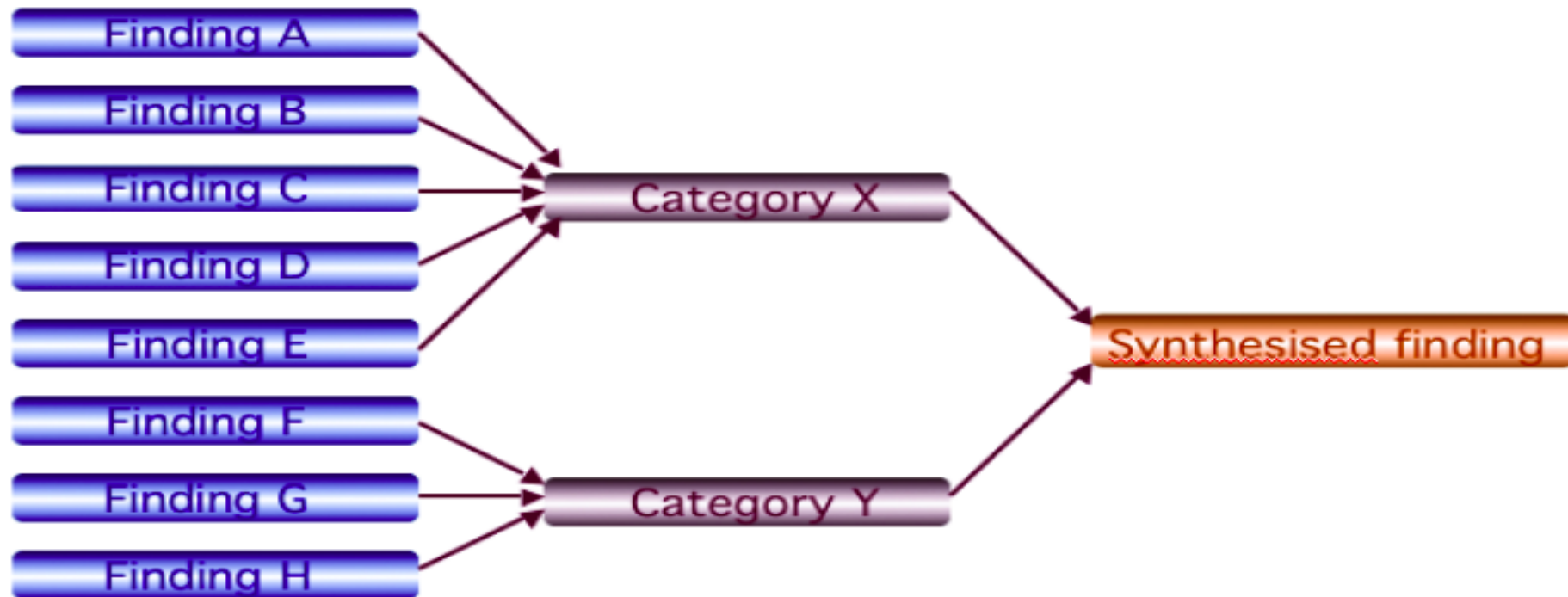
**Unequivocal:** evidence beyond reasonable doubt that may include findings that are matter of fact, directly reported/observed.

**Credible:** evidence that is plausible in the light of the data but open to different interpretations.

**Unsupported:** evidence that is not supported by raw data.

Can be stated propositionally as “if-then” statements - for example: “*If students are advised reconsider their choice of study , their relatives will sometimes feel as if they are not involved*”. (a somewhat awkward and eccentric form)

the declamatory form that emphasizes the probability of the claim: “*Relatives of students that are advised to reconsider their choice of study may feel as if they are not involved if strategies to include them are not pursued*”.



# Lines of action

**S1:** Whatever type of learning is occurring, four conditional processes should be taken into account: knowledge sharing, boundary crossing, communication and enabling learning factors

- **Category 1:** Different types of learning
- **Category 2:** Essential conditions for team learning
- **Category 3:** Enabling learning factors

**S2:** For team learning to occur, power differences should be minimised, authority structures should be analysed and team leaders should take responsibility in these matters.

- **Category 4:** Organisational authority structure and distribution of formal power
- **Category 5:** Leadership styles and their influence on team learning

**S3:** No matter which pattern of team learning is promoted, reflective and active learning should always be part of the process.

- Category 6:** Descriptions of team learning
- Category 7:** Patterns of team learning

**Category 4: Organisational authority structure and distribution of formal power**

**Negative consequences of lack of formal power**

No control over time movement and work, not invited for team meetings limiting the chance to integrate knowledge resulting in a perception of being less valuable (U: 2, 7). Discouraging factors include meetings outside working hours, fear of 'identification' with a problem (U: 2, 6, 7), stifling and intimidating nature of meetings (C: 2).

**Sources of power differences**

Power differences are institutionalised by a hierarchical authority structure and supporting policies: communication patterns are steered by hierarchical positions, authority results from formal position rather than technical knowledge, top management keeps the differences in place (U: 2, 6, 7). Knowledge becomes a source of power in the context of persuading stakeholders and gaining respect and trust (U: 11, 14).

**Power differences and team learning**

Reflection and action mostly occurs in teams where leaders minimize power (U: 1, 2, 9, 11) and create a psychologically safe, collaborative and inclusive atmosphere (U: 2, 3, 5, 6, 7).

← Category

← Sub-category

← Finding

**Category 5: Leadership styles and their influence on team learning**

**A leader's task**

Leaders engage in selecting and motivating staff, enrol staff intellectually and emotionally in a project, coaches and reflects on the team, with sensitivity to potential hierarchical structures in the organisation. The importance and fit for purpose of a person for a project should be communicated (U: 7).

**Leadership influences**

Leadership is guided by existing personality traits as well as external influences such as time pressure, hierarchical structure. Leaders may take over the leadership style of top management (U: 3).

**Leadership styles**

Different styles are identified including transactional, transformational, ambidextrous and multi champion or expert leadership, stimulating different types of learning (C: 3). A focus on contact and relationship building and shared leadership is appreciated (U: 2, C: 7, 11).

← Line of action

**For team learning and conditional team learning processes to occur, power differences should be minimised or eliminated and authority structures that reproduce power differences should be analysed. The team leaders should take responsibility to influence the power relationships inside their teams and as a result influence the kind of learning that takes place.**

↑  
Level of evidence

# What we learned

- **S1** on conditional processes adds to the current results produced by quantitative studies and brings more sensitivity to the viewpoints of employees.
- **S2's** findings on power issues have not frequently occurred in studies addressing team learning and could be further explored.
- **S3** on learning patterns supports the view that learning should not be formalised, however viewpoints were located at different positions on the formalisation spectrum. The issue remains undecided and open for discussion.

# Limitations

- Full screening and appraisal by one, with 20% backup by another.
  - → potential bias?
- No expert consultation in search strategy
  - → sensitivity of the search?
- Decision to exclude findings that were unsupported
  - → sensitivity analysis?
- All studies were in Western contexts, hence coherent
  - → transferability of findings?